

SENSORY FRIENDLY MASS

Office for Persons with Disabilities & the Deaf Apostolate
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA / www.OPDarchphila.org

Come to me.

Matthew 19:14

All are welcome. All belong.



Homily Helps (Lent)

These Homily Helps often suggest that the homilist retell a part of one or more of the readings. The reason behind this logic is that repetition and rephrasing are a wonderful means to assist persons with developmental disabilities to retain information. Hearing the proclaimed readings provides people with only one medium of learning. Through visual aids, storytelling/rephrasing, and giving examples, the readings can be further reinforced.

First Sunday of Lent

What is temptation? What is sin? Paraphrase the stories in simpler and more animated language. Highlight the instances of temptation and the very different response of Adam & Eve compared to Jesus. Point out that the because of the sinfulness of Adam & Eve, people were punished, but because of Jesus, heaven has been opened to us again.

Theme: Sin is giving in to temptation. Jesus saves us from our sins.

Visual Aid: Use an apple, pomegranate or some other fruit when retelling the ‘fall of man.’”

Second Sunday of Lent

Using the visual aid, retell the story of the Transfiguration in simpler language and point out what is happening in the image. Jesus chose some of his disciples to see who he really was- the Son of God. They were very scared at first, but they went on to share the story of Jesus after he ascended into heaven. We are called to be disciples of Jesus, and we can see God in the world around us. Give some examples of how we can see God in those around us.

Theme: Jesus reveals himself to us.

Visual Aid: Print off a poster-sized image of the Transfiguration.

Third Sunday of Lent

What is a secret? Do you have any secrets that people do not know about you? What would you do if someone that you just met knew all about your secrets? Using the Visual aid, retell the story of “The Woman at the Well.” This woman was a Samaritan. Samaritans and Jews did not like one another during Jesus’ time. The Jews believed that the Samaritans were unclean and that it was bad to interact with them, but Jesus still went to the

Samaritan woman at the well and revealed himself to her. He knew her heart and all of her secrets. Then she went and told all of her friends about Jesus and they began to believe in him too.

Theme: Jesus is for everyone. Jesus knows our hearts.

Visual Aid: Print off a poster-sized image of "The Woman at the Well."

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Retell the story of the anointing of David. David was the smallest son and he was chosen to become king. Is there another Bible story about David? People did not expect David to do great things because he was small, but he did great things with God's help. Retell the story of Jesus and the blind man. People who were blind were not treated well during Jesus' time, but Jesus chose a blind man to reveal the truth- that he was the Son of God.

Theme: God chooses the lowly to do great things.

Visual Aid: At the beginning of the Homily, show two presents. One that is big and one that is small. Ask the congregation which present they would prefer to receive.

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Retell the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. Jesus LOVED Lazarus. He even cried when he learned that his friend had died. Jesus brings Lazarus back to life. If we are friends of Jesus and follow his example, he will give us new life- eternal life in heaven.

Theme: Jesus gives us new life.

Palm Sunday

Today is called Palm Sunday because we receive palms to remember when Jesus entered into Jerusalem for the last time before he was crucified. The people took palm branches and laid them down on the ground in front of Jesus to honor him as he rode into town. This happened right before Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with his disciples. We also read St. Matthew's account of Jesus' Passion. We remember this today because we are preparing our hearts for Holy Week. This week is especially important, because we remember the events that lead up to Jesus' death on the cross before we celebrate his resurrection on Easter Sunday. What can we do this week to remember Jesus' Passion?

Theme: Preparing for Holy Week.